

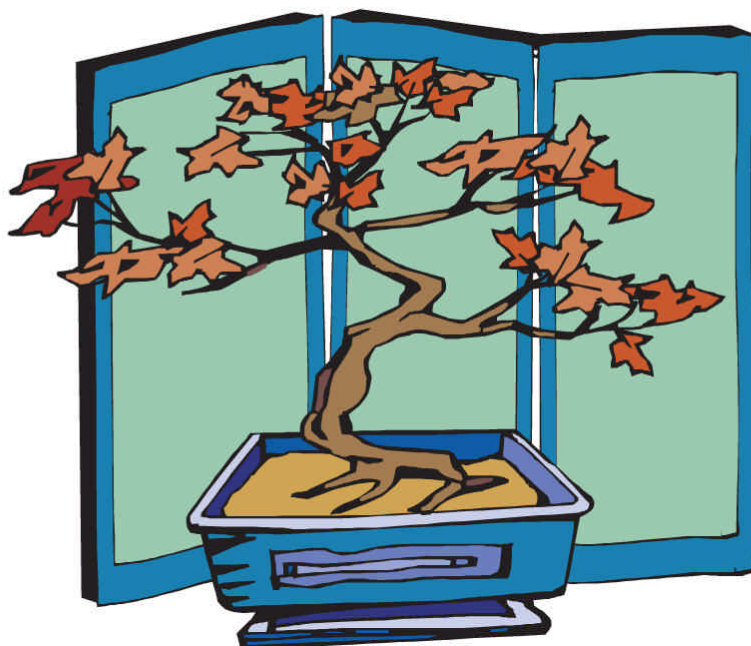


United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service



# Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program



# **ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER PROGRAM**



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## NRCS Outreach Division Asian Pacific Islander Initiative

**N** RCS' mission is to provide leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.  
Our vision is harmony between people and the land.

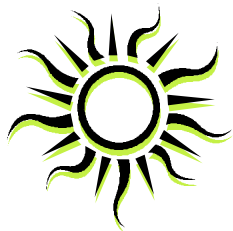
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## Introduction

One of NRCS' priorities and concerns has been to increase the diversity of its workforce through the hiring of students from various colleges and universities. NRCS has been successful through the USDA 1890 Scholars Program and through the USDA Hispanic Partnership Program. The NRCS Outreach Division is working to assist the Agency in accomplishing its workforce diversity goals through the development and implementation of an NRCS Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program.

## About NRCS



NRCS has 70 years of experience assisting owners of America's private land with conserving their soil, water, and other natural resources. Local, State, and federal agencies and policymakers also rely on NRCS expertise. NRCS delivers technical assistance based on sound science suited to a customer's specific needs. Cost shares and financial incentives are available in some cases. Most work is done with local partners. NRCS' partnership with local conservation districts serves almost every county in the Continental United States, including the Caribbean and Pacific Basin territories. Participation in our programs is voluntary. You can find

more information about NRCS at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov> or by contacting your local USDA Service Center located in the blue pages of the telephone directory.



## NRCS Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program

One of NRCS' priorities and concerns has been to increase the diversity of its workforce through the hiring of students from various colleges and universities.

The aim of the Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program is to strengthen a partnership between NRCS and the Asian Pacific Islander community in an effort to increase the number of students studying in agriculture and Agency-related disciplines, and to offer employment opportunities.

### Eligibility

The applicants must be:

- I. A United States citizen
- II. Accepted for enrollment at one of the participating universities as a degree seeking student in Agriculture, Natural Resources, or an NRCS related discipline

## Academic Requirements



Scholars must maintain a full-time course load as specified by the institution. NRCS, in concert with the institution, may grant exception to the full-time course load requirements due to extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the scholar.

Scholars must maintain at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale cumulative GPA (or equivalent) for each semester.

The NRCS Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program Manager will work with the student's academic advisor and the Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator to ensure that the student maintains his/her eligibility by adhering to the grade point average requirement.

NRCS and the institution must approve changes of the major and/or credit hours prior to implementation.

## Participating Universities

University of Hawaii @ Manoa  
University of Hawaii @ Hilo  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
Student Service Center, Room 413  
2600 Campus Road  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822  
Contact Person: Dr. Lee Putman

California State Polytechnic University – Pomona  
College of Agriculture, 2-216  
3801 West Temple Avenue  
Pomona, California 91768  
Contact Person: Mon Yee

University of Minnesota – Twin Cities  
Agriculture, Food & Environmental Science  
190 Coffey Hall  
1420 Eckles Avenue

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St. Paul, Minnesota 55108  
Contact Person: Jessica Krueger

University of Wisconsin – River Falls  
Agriculture, Food & Environmental Science  
210 Agriculture Science Hall  
410 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
River Falls, Wisconsin 54022-5001  
Contact Person: Dr. Stephen Ridley

## Obligations & Responsibilities

Scholars must work for NRCS 1 (one) year for each year of financial support provided, unless otherwise agreed upon.

Scholars are expected to report to their assigned work site during the summer period, unless other arrangements are made by the Agency. The Student Career Experience Program provides work experience which is directly related to the student's academic program and goals. Students can avail themselves to such flexibilities as year round employment, flexible schedules and assignments. Students participating in this program through the NRCS Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program will gain exposure to public service while enhancing their education and shaping their career choices. The Asian Pacific Islanders Scholars Program is a formally structured program which requires a written formal agreement by all parties (NRCS, school, and student) as to the:

- Nature of work assignments;
  - Schedule of work assignments and class attendance;
  - Evaluation procedures;
- and
- Requirements for continuation and successful completion of the program.

Scholars must complete a minimum of 640 hours of career-related work before completion of, or concurrently with, the course requirements prior to conversion into the permanent

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workforce. Although students may earn 640 hours in one summer period, scholars are expected to work each summer period unless other arrangements have been made with the Agency.

Scholars desiring to change work site locations must notify the Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator and the National Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program Manager.

Scholars are required to seek degrees in the following fields of study which are in place with the NRCS 2005-2008 Workforce Plan: Those fields of study are:

- Biological Sciences (Natural Resources Field)
- Soil Conservationist
- Soil Scientist
- Agriculture Engineer
- Civil Engineer

**NRCS Asian Pacific Islander Scholar is required to:**

- provide addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, etc. to the Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator and the National Asian Pacific Scholars Program Manager to ensure accessibility;
  - report changes in school and work schedules;
  - ensure timely submission of paperwork for tuition, books, fees, and supplies;
  - maintain open lines of communication with the Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator and the National Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program Manager;
  - keep regularly scheduled meeting appointments;
  - inform the Agency coordinator and supervisor of accomplishments, achievements, in addition to first signs of problems, issues, and concerns;
  - complete Individual Development Plan, training plan, and other requested reports;
  - sign and adhere to an Employment Service Agreement;
  - and report to the assigned work site.
-

**District Conservationist is required to:**

- serve as the academic mentor and counselor;
- ensure the development of an individual development plan;
- ensure the development of performance standards and performance elements;
- and assist with work site logistics, office hours and travel schedules.

**NRCS API Scholars Administrative Coordinator (State Office) is required to:**

- ensure scholars are paid the appropriate salary;
- ensure the necessary paperwork is prepared and submitted for timely payment of tuition, books, fees, and supplies;
- ensure each scholar is assigned a work site mentor;
- provide guidance in career planning and professional development, summer placement priorities, and Agency code of ethics and conduct;
- meet at least two times a semester/quarter with the scholar;
- conduct an exit interview with scholar;
- receive, distribute, and secure all computer and Agency equipment;
- and receive and maintain a copy of scholar's quarter/semester transcripts.

**NRCS National API Scholars Program Manager is required to:**

- disseminate pertinent Agency and departmental information;
  - ensure the Service Agreement is signed and copies disseminated to appropriate parties;
  - coordinate administrative and operational activities with appropriate Agency officials;
  - assure employment placement after graduation;
  - serve as the USDA representative to resolve problems, issues and concerns (i.e. grades, work assignments, major, transfers, financial, etc.) with the institution;
  - and serve as an advisor on the Agency's behalf.
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## Withdrawals & Terminations

### **Withdrawals**

Scholars must submit a letter of resignation to the state Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator, with copies to the National Asian Pacific Scholars Program Manager, informing them of their decision to withdraw from the Program prior to the actual effective date of withdrawal. All scholar withdrawals will adhere to the Agency guidelines on employee separation from service.

### **Terminations**

Scholars who fail to adhere to the terms of the signed Service Agreement may be terminated from the Program, in addition to repayment of agency funds.

Scholars who do not maintain the required grade point average may be terminated from the Program.

Violation of code of ethics and/or conduct may be grounds for termination from the program.

## Program Provisions

### **Financial**

The NRCS Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program provides full tuition, fees, books, and supplies (i.e., paper, pencils, calculators, etc.), use of a personal computer and software, employment and employee benefits and room and board each year at one of the eligible institutions.

**NOTE:** Use of government funds for personal use is prohibited.

### **Tuition, Books, Fees and Supplies**

NRCS shall provide full tuition, books, fees, and supplies to the scholar while they are in the program.

State Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator will submit to the National Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program Manager a list of all costs incurred by the scholar (i.e., tuition, books, fees, labs, conferences, workshops, etc.) each semester/quarter.

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Scholars should immediately contact the state Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator regarding tuition, books, fees, and supply concerns.

## **Computers**

NRCS will issue a personal computer (preloaded), and software to each scholar.

Scholars should contact the National Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program Manager for additional software.

Scholars will be responsible for the security of their computers when they are not being used. The scholar will have the option of asking the state office to house the computers during extended periods of absence to maintain appropriate security (i.e. Christmas break, summer break, etc.). Scholars will abide by the Agency's policy regarding maintenance and security of assigned computers, property, and other equipment.

Scholars should contact the state Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator for technical support assistance for problems associated with the computer and software.

Scholars who withdraw or are terminated from the Program must return the computer and software to the state Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator.

**NOTE:** Computers are for the use of the scholar only.

## Employment



Work sites and assignments will be determined by NRCS.

Scholars are expected to report to their assigned work site during the summer unless other arrangements are made by NRCS.

Scholars must notify the state Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator and the National Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program Manager to request a change in work site locations.

NRCS must provide positions and work experiences related to the scholars' academic/career goals.

Scholars must complete a minimum of 640 hours of career-related work before completion of or concurrently with the course requirements prior to conversion into the NRCS workforce.

Scholars completing their freshman year (30 credit hours or 45 quarter hours) are eligible for a GS-3 level, and a GS-4 level thereafter based on Office of Personnel Management guidelines.

Graduating scholars with a 3.0 GPA or better are eligible for a position that commensurate with their academic studies at a GS-7 level.

Position descriptions and performance standards are developed by NRCS.

Scholars will receive pay in accordance with established pay schedules during periods of work. Scholars will earn annual and sick leave under the appropriate schedule. Scholars may select health and life insurance. Scholars are covered by the Federal Employee Retirement System.

Requests for extended leave must be in writing with supporting documentation from a health official, parent, or other appropriate source. Periods of extended leave cannot exceed 12 months of cumulative leave without forfeiting the scholarship.

Scholars may be non-competitively converted into the permanent work force when they have completed all course requirements, completed at least 640 hours of career-related work, and met the qualification standards for the appropriate targeted position.

### **Housing and Transportation**

NRCS may pay for lodging expenses for the scholar on a case by case basis.

The state Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Administrative Coordinator shall assist the National Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program Manager with locating housing for the scholars.

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NRCS ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER SCHOLAR

NRCS may pay for transportation expenses and travel expenses related to training (i.e., Scholars orientation, conferences, workshops, etc.).

Scholars must complete and submit a travel voucher upon returning from government travel.



## Authorities

Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC 2000 (d) – 2000 (d)(1); P.L. 88-352

Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990; P.L. 101-624, Sec. 2501; S. 2830

Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002; P.L. 107-171; H.R. 2646

5 CFR, Parts 213 and 410

Executive Orders 12015 and 13270

Departmental Regulation 1340-006

## Definitions

**USDA** – United States Department of Agriculture

**NRCS** – Natural Resources Conservation Service

**Scholar** – student selected to participate in the NRCS Asian Pacific Islander Scholars program.

**Service Agreement** – document signed by the scholar, agency representative, and institution outlining the requirements and specifics of the program.

**Work Site** – scholar's official duty station or temporary work location.

**Position Description (PD)** – the official NRCS document detailing the scholar's specific duties and job responsibilities.

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**Performance Standards** – the official NRCS document assessing the scholar's work performance.

**Individual Development Plan (IDP)** – a NRCS document outlining requirements necessary for successful accomplishment of work duties and responsibilities, personal, professional, and career development.

**Termination** – the dismissal or separation of a student from participation in the NRCS Tribal Scholars program.

**Resignation** – the voluntary act of separation from the Asian Pacific Islander Scholars program by the scholar.

**OPM** – Office of Personnel Management

## References & Other Sources

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)

Asian Pacific Islander Organization, [www.apio.org](http://www.apio.org)

USDA 1890 National Scholars Program, [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)





## Application & Important Dates

<b>May 4, 2005</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Application Deadline</b></p> <p>This application must be received by May 4, 2005. You can submit your application by fax or mail. If you submit your application by fax, you must mail your official transcript by May 4, 2005.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fax: 301-504-2248</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mail to: Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program</p> <p style="text-align: center;">USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Outreach Division</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5601 Sunnyside Ave, STOP 5474</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Beltsville, Maryland 20705</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Telephone Number: 301-504-2229</p>
<b>May 9-13, 2005</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rating Process</b></p> <p>NRCS will rate submitted applications through the Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program Rating Panel.</p>
<b>May 27, 2005</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Notification of Scholars</b></p> <p>Each selected scholar will be notified by the Agency.</p>
<p><b>Date and Location</b></p> <p><b>To Be Determined</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Orientation for Selected Scholars</b></p> <p>All selected scholarship recipients will be requested to attend an orientation. The orientation is all expenses paid and will feature introduction into NRCS.</p>

## Application

### Applicant's Biographical Questionnaire

#### I. Biographical Information

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Legal Name (Please Print)

Last	First	Middle
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Permanent Home Address

Number/Street	City	State	Zip Code
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Telephone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a U.S. Citizen? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No Sex \_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_ Female

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Education**

Name of High School \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

School Address

Number/Street	City	State	Zip Code
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School Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

GPA (4.0 scale) \_\_\_\_\_ ACT Composite Score \_\_\_\_\_

SAT Combined Score \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Must submit official transcript with application.**

List any other schools you have attended in the last 4 years. List the schools in order of attendance with the one you attended most recently first.

Name of School	location (city & state)	dates of attendance

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NRCS ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER SCHOLAR


List any advanced or special programs, courses or summer courses you have taken. List the most recent first.

Course/ program	name of school	location (city & state)	dates of attendance	Hours per week

Institution of Consideration (see list of participating universities)

\_\_\_\_\_

Address

\_\_\_\_\_

Number/Street

City

State

Zip Code

What course of study (major) will you pursue?

1<sup>st</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Do you plan to go to graduate or professional school? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_X\_ No

If yes, field of study \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Activities

List any activities in which you have participated in or outside of school, i.e. sports, music, student government, clubs, church, civic, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_

<b>activity</b>	<b>dates of participation</b>	<b>offices held</b>	<b>special awards, honors, recognition</b>

List volunteer services or jobs held in the last 3 years including summer employment.

<b>Volunteer services/jobs</b>	<b>name of employer/organization</b>	<b>dates of service/employment</b>	<b>hours per week</b>	<b>special awards</b>

#### **IV. Leisure-Time Activities**

1. Give a brief description of your favorite leisure time activity.

#### **V. Applicant's Self-Assessment**

1. Describe an experience that has given you a sense of leadership resulting in great satisfaction and pride. Explain

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2. Briefly discuss why you want to study agricultural, food, natural resource sciences, or another related scientific discipline in college.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Describe how NRCS will benefit if you were selected for the Asian Pacific Islander Scholars Program. (Long term and Short term)

Please review this form to make sure you have answered all the questions completely.

*I certify that I have completed this application and that all statements are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. Any false statements may eliminate me from consideration for this scholarship.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**VI. Secondary School Assessment**

(Section to be completed by the counselor, teacher, principal or professor/advisor)

\_\_\_\_\_

Legal Name of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

Are you confident that the student will/or have received a high school diploma during the current academic year? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If no, please explain.

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's class rank \_\_\_\_\_ How many students in the class? \_\_\_\_\_

Student's cumulative grade point average. \_\_\_\_\_

Act Composite Score \_\_\_\_\_ SAT Combined Score \_\_\_\_\_

Does student meet academic requirements to transfer? (Applicable to transferees only)

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, give total credit hours: \_\_\_\_\_ quarter or \_\_\_\_\_ semester hours

Describe the student's strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths:

Weakness:

\_\_\_\_\_



Has the student shown exceptional talent or originality in agriculture, food, natural resource sciences and/or other related disciplines? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Please explain:

Additional comments:

Please attach an official secondary school transcript (with seal and signature).

*I certify that I have completed this portion of the application and that all statements are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Secondary School Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Position

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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